SUBJECT OUTLINE		
JCU Graduate Research School (GRS)	**RD7002 'Situating the Research'** **Research Doctorate Candidates**	JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA
www.jcu.edu.au/grs	GRS@jcu.edu.au	07 4781 5861 or 4735

Study Periods: Research Training Periods 1-4
Mode: Standard
Subject Coordinator: Dean, Graduate Research Studies
Prepared By: Dr Anne Swinbourne and Professor Helene Marsh
Updated By: Professor Helene Marsh and Dr Liz Tynan, June 2017

Enquiries: grs@jcu.edu.au

Subject Contacts

	Contact	Phone	Email	Room	Consultation Times*
Subject Coordinator	Dean, Graduate Research Studies	+61 7 4781 5575	grs@jcu.edu.au	Room 028, Building 17	By appointment

Other Key Staff

Primary Advisor	This is the Primary Advisor of the Candidate undertaking this subject				
Chair, Candidature Committee	This is normally the relevant Head of the Enrolling Organisational Unit[1] or nominee				
Relevant Director of Research Training	Please contact relevant Enrolling Organisational Unit for details				By appointment
Professional Development Coordinator	Dr Liz Tynan	+61 7 4781 6278	Elizabeth.Tynan@jcu.edu.au	Room 028B, Building 17	By appointment
Director, HDR Cohort Doctoral Studies Program (if applicable)	Please contact relevant Enrolling Organisational Unit for details				By appointment

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[1] College or School or ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies

Key Dates

The following summary provides a quick reference to the most important aspects of this subject. Please make sure that you read all the details of the entire subject outline.

As per Section 5.2 of the [Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Requirements policy](#), doctoral candidates will be eligible to seek to have their candidature confirmed after the equivalent of 0.5 EFTSL of provisional candidature and must have had their candidature confirmed within 1 EFTSL of provisional enrolment. Candidates who fail to meet this timeline may be placed Under Review.

Because the completion of subjects RD7001 'Planning the Research' and RD7002 'Situating the Research' requires a meeting of the Candidature Committee to reach a final decision regarding the candidate's confirmation, it is efficient though not essential for the requirements for the two subjects to be completed simultaneously. A suggested timetable for a full-time PhD candidate to complete the requirements for both subjects is provided in the [HDR Confirmation of Candidature Procedure](#). This timetable should be modified for part-time candidates through discussions between the candidate and their Advisory Panel.

Subject Description

RD7002 is one of two subjects that must be completed by doctoral candidates to meet the requirements for the Confirmation of Candidature degree milestone and to have their candidature confirmed. Candidates should read this Subject Outline in conjunction with the [Confirmation of Candidature Procedure](#).

The overall intention of the Confirmation of Candidature degree milestone is to allow the candidate to demonstrate that:

1. The candidate's project is of a suitable scope and standard for the degree;

2. The candidate has the capacity to:

    a. complete the project in a timely manner with the resources available and the potential to obtain any required permits; and

    b. undertake a degree at the required level by demonstrating:

    - mastery of a substantial body of knowledge at the frontier of the field of research including substantial knowledge of the principles and methods;

    - the cognitive skills to demonstrate expert understanding of the associated theoretical knowledge, and to reflect critically on the theory and practice of the field of research; and

    - the communication skills to explain and critique theoretical propositions, methodologies and conclusions and present cogently a complex investigation to peers and the wider academic community.

3. The candidate's HDR Professional Development Audit and Plan in [COC-FORM-02](#) is appropriate for the candidate's degree requirements and career aspirations.

RD7002 addresses Item 2b above. The Advisory Panel will assist the candidate to complete the Assessment Item, a piece of substantive written work, to the satisfaction of the Candidature Committee.

Subject Learning Outcomes

RD7002 is intended to encourage development of critical thinking and analytic skills early in research degree candidature. Masters candidates undertaking this subject will be required to show their ability to comprehend, evaluate and synthesise scholarship relevant to their project. They will need to produce a high-quality literature review, critical reflection and/or analysis of an appropriate body of literature or creative process or a systematic review that provides a scholarly foundation for their research. This work must be carried out during candidature; work written before the commencement of candidature cannot be submitted for this subject.

Candidates who successfully complete RD7002 will be able to:

1. Interpret, critique and explain theoretical propositions, methodologies and conclusions; design, theorise and communicate research that has the potential to make a significant and original contribution to knowledge and/or professional practice; and independently plan and develop an original research proposal;

2. Apply knowledge of research principles and methods applicable to the field of work or learning;

3. Apply research knowledge and skills with intellectual independence, initiative and creativity in new situations; and

4. Communicate complex research and/or discipline concepts and plans to a broadly discipline-literate audience, using a variety of modes.

Graduate Attributes

The graduates of James Cook University are prepared and equipped to create a brighter future for life in the tropics world-wide.

JCU graduates are committed to lifelong learning, intellectual development, and to the display of exemplary personal, professional and ethical standards. They have a sense of their place in the tropics and are charged with professional, community, and environmental responsibility.

JCU graduates appreciate the need to embrace and be acquainted with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia. They are committed to reconciliation, diversity and sustainability. They exhibit a willingness to lead and to contribute to the intellectual, environmental, cultural, economic and social challenges of regional, national, and international communities of the tropics.

Assessment

Requirements for Completion of RD7002

The single assessable piece of work for RD7002 is a substantive piece of writing of 4000-8000 words, in a form appropriate for the discipline within which the candidate is enrolled.

The written work must be a literature review, critical reflection and or analysis of an appropriate body of literature or creative process, or a systematic review. This work must have been written since the commencement of the higher degree by research candidature. Research papers or conference papers are not suitable for submission for this subject.

The content may be broad (such as a critical synthesis of the development of theoretical thought within a discipline) or relatively narrow (for example a critical analysis of one issue to be considered within the final thesis). The work must demonstrate high level critical thinking and analytical ability that is considered suitable by the Candidature Committee to form the scholarly basis of the research project.

The Primary and at least one Secondary Advisor will be asked to submit a report on the substantive piece of written work to the remaining members of the Candidature Committee on the RD7002/RM7002 relevant proforma. Any other members of the Advisory Panel should be consulted and asked to provide feedback on the substantive piece of written work.

Assessment Guidelines

In their report, the Advisory Panel will be asked to assess:

a. The strategy for the literature search;

b. The logical structure of the work;

c. The English expression; and

d. The critical analysis within the work.

Advisors will be asked to consider their input into the written work in the context of their expectations of a doctoral candidate in the early stages of their candidature.

Grade for RD7002 'Situating the Research'

The members of the Candidature Committee who are not on the Advisory Panel will discuss the written piece of work and the RD7002 Advisory Panel Report on Substantive Piece of Written Work Proforma.

The candidate's grade for RD7002 must be recommended to the Dean, Graduate Research Studies by the members of the Candidature Committee who are external to the candidate's Advisory Panel through the Confirmation of Candidature Report Proforma. Members of the Advisory Panel and the candidate must not be involved when the other members of the Candidature Committee finalise the grade recommendation.

In exceptional circumstances, these members of the Candidature Committee may seek revisions to the written work before recommending a final grade. In this instance the Chair of the Candidature Committee must notify the Graduate Research School in writing and the candidate will be placed Under Review. The revisions must occur within three months of the Candidature Committee's meeting date unless there are exceptional circumstances which would make this unfeasible.

Grading System

The grading system for RD7002 'Situating the Research' is as follows:

Pass ....The candidate has demonstrated mastery of the knowledge in the relevant field and the cognitive and communication skills appropriate to the stage of candidature and at the level required for a research doctorate.

Conceded Pass ..... The candidate has not demonstrated mastery of the knowledge in the relevant field and the cognitive and communication skills appropriate to the stage of candidature and at the level required for a research doctorate. However, the standard of the work is consistent with that required for candidature within another cognate research or coursework degree offered by the University (e.g. Research Masters or Graduate Diploma).

Fail ....The candidate has not demonstrated mastery of the knowledge in the relevant field and the cognitive and communication skills appropriate to the stage of candidature and at the level required for a research doctorate, nor is the standard of the work consistent with that required for candidature within another cognate research or coursework degree offered by the University.

Plagiarism, Referencing and Cheating

A workshop on plagiarism is a Compulsory Component of the GRS Professional Development Program[2] for HDR candidates. Additional online training in avoiding plagiarism is also available in the HDR Students Community on LearnJCU. All candidates are expected to be familiar with how to avoid plagiarism.

All HDR candidates have access and are encouraged to use iThenticate to check their papers and thesis chapters as they write them (refer the GRS Professional Development Program Handbook for further information). The iThenticate plagiarism checking system can be accessed via the GRS home page.

Candidates are strongly advised to check their RD7002 substantive written work through IThenticate and to discuss the details of the report with their Advisory Panel or an appropriate member of the JCU Teaching and Learning Development Unit.

Referencing and attribution practices can differ between and even within disciplines and understanding and interpreting these differences in the context of the IThenticate matching report requires knowledge that should be obtained through the completion of the Plagiarism workshop offered by the GRS Professional Development Program.

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[2] See GRS Workshops webpage: http://www.jcu.edu.au/grs/workshops/index.htm

Additional Student Support

Support Needed	Who to Contact
Accommodation	www.jcu.edu.au/accommodation/
Advanced Analytical Centre	http://www.jcu.edu.au/aac/
Childcare	https://www.jcu.edu.au/graduate-research-school/forms-and-policies/hdr-confirmation-of-candidature-proceudre
Employment	www.jcu.edu.au/careers/
e-Research Centre	http://eresearch.jcu.edu.au/
Equity and Diversity	https://www.jcu.edu.au/learning-and-teaching/students/student-equity-and-wellbeing
Ethics and Integrity	https://www.jcu.edu.au/research-services/ethics-and-integrity
Financial	Student Loans www.jcu.edu.au/student/Loans/studentloans/
Graduate Research School	http://www.jcu.edu.au/grs/
Indigenous students	https://www.jcu.edu.au/australian-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-centre/student-support
International Students	http://www.jcu.edu.au/international/
IT Help Desk	https://www.jcu.edu.au/information-and-communications-technology/units/it-services-and-support/it-help-desk
Learning Skills / Language Help	GRS Academic Support Coordinator – email grs@jcu.edu.au to request an appointment
Library	https://www.jcu.edu.au/library
Library Liaison Contacts by Discipline	https://www.jcu.edu.au/library/about/library-contact-details/liaison-librarian-discipline-responsibilities
Personal / Emotional Support	Counselling Service https://www.jcu.edu.au/counselling
Research Services	https://www.jcu.edu.au/research-services
Statistics Support	GRS Statshelp http://www.jcu.edu.au/grs/JCU_097309.html
Student Association	https://www.jcu.edu.au/international-students/life-at-jcu/student-services-and-support/jcu-student-association
Students with disabilities	http://www.jcu.edu.au/disability/
Workplace Health and Safety	https://www.jcu.edu.au/work-health-and-safety

Equity Statement

James Cook University is committed to encouraging equity and diversity. In particular, JCU aims to provide an optimal learning environment to students from a variety of backgrounds:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

- People from rural and isolated areas

- People from low socio-economic backgrounds

- People with disabilities

- People from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Information relating to scholarships, bursaries and services for HDR candidates is available on the Graduate Research School website: http://www.jcu.edu.au/grs/

Other JCU and School Policies and Guidelines Relevant to RD7002

- Important policy information is available for all JCU HDR candidates on the Graduate Research School website: http://www.jcu.edu.au/grs/

- See also the Higher Degree by Research Requirements policy: https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/research-education/higher-degree-by-research-requirements

- See also the Confirmation of Candidature webpage: https://www.jcu.edu.au/graduate-research-school/forms-and-policies/hdr-confirmation-of-candidature-proceudre

Subject Feedback

For general information about processes for student feedback and grievances at JCU, students should consult the JCU website: http://www.jcu.edu.au/student/complaints/index.htm

JCU staff value and appreciate student feedback as a source of evidence about the quality of our courses so you are strongly encouraged to provide considered feedback on all aspects of your HDR candidature. JCU has several methods of systematically capturing the experiences of HDR candidates.

Every year, recent JCU graduates are invited to complete the Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ), part of the nation-wide Australian Graduate Survey owned by Graduate Careers Australia.

In even numbered years, all JCU HDR candidates are invited to undertake an online survey based on the PREQ. Individual HDR candidates, their Enrolling Organisational Unit or advisors, are not identified through this process.

In odd numbered years, JCU HDR candidates are invited to participate in focus groups conducted by an expert consultant independent of the Graduate Research School. Individual HDR candidates or their advisors will not be identified through this process.